

ER-6-3317

*Records*

NOV 20 1954

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director (Administration)

SUBJECT : Progress on Agency Records Management Program

REFERENCE : Memo to Chief, Management Staff from Chief, Records Management Division, dated 29 October 1954

1. In accordance with your request the following comments are submitted regarding the above subject, with particular reference to each specific element of the records management program as encompassed by the Chief, Records Management Division:

a. Forms

In August of 1954 a proposed Forms Indices [REDACTED] was sent to this Office with a request for a review and advice as to the status of all numbered forms of interest to this Office. A review was made, obsolete forms were reported, and samples accumulated for future reference. An Office Instruction regarding forms management and implementation of a recently revised "Request for Approval of Forms" (Form No. 30) has been prepared and has been coordinated with the Forms Management Branch, Management Staff. Up to that time no intensive forms management program had been undertaken by this Office pending a proposed supplemental training course in forms management.

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Inasmuch as the Logistics Office has headquarters responsibility for budgeting, stocking, procuring and reproducing forms, an Agency Forms Program is of great interest to this Office.

b. Reports

In April of 1954 meetings were held between representatives of Management Staff and this Office to discuss the possibility of initiating a Reports Management Program within LO. A plan was proposed by the Records Management Division, Management Staff, which estimated a required staffing of 50% of the responsible officer's time for the first six months, and 25% of his time on a continuing basis. At this time the Logistics Office was not prepared to undertake this project until the classification survey and the end-of-fiscal year workload had been completed; nor was this Office in a position to do so until appropriate positions for the Administrative Staff were approved and filled. Substantial assistance of the Management Staff was assured if the Logistics Office was prepared to undertake this program, but no commitment was made as to an exact time when this assistance would be forthcoming. On 15 November a representative of the Management Staff advised that the proffered assistance can now be furnished.

This Office is reluctant to undertake an individual reports management program until the Management Staff has developed an integrated program that can be applied Agency-wide, or at least throughout the DD/A area.

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c. Correspondence

Improvements in correspondence standards and establishment of uniform procedures for processing correspondence have long been objectives of this Office. Suggestions and comments regarding a proposed Agency Correspondence Manual were submitted to the Records Management Division approximately one year ago. The lack of a current Agency Correspondence Manual for ready reference by employees hampers the indoctrination of personnel in correspondence procedures; however, Office directives concerning preparation of correspondence have been issued; correspondence is being reviewed to improve standards; and clerical training is recommended for those employees who do not measure up to the standards required.

d. Filing Systems

In January of 1952 the Records Management Division surveyed the filing systems used for general correspondence in the office of the Chief and in the Divisions of this Office and recommended the adoption of a "subject" filing system as drafted in a proposed Agency handbook. The recommended system was adopted and is currently in use. This filing system has not proved satisfactory and Records Management Division has been so advised. In spite of internal dissatisfaction, this Office has insisted upon the use of the system on the basis that standardization throughout the Agency is most desirable, and that in time the prescribed subjects may be revised to fit Agency needs more precisely.

The Records Management Division recommendation that official files and background material be maintained at the signing level has been tried by this Office and found impractical and unsatisfactory. Except for policy matters, this Office disagrees with this recommendation on the basis that it is necessary that the preparing echelon maintain the official file and background material for reference, continuity of files, and reconstruction of a transaction at a later date if need be. The location of the official record and background material is significant since the length of maintenance and eventual disposition are generally determined by organizational level.

e. Filing Equipment and Filing Supplies

Agency Notices [REDACTED] have been developed by the Management Staff regarding standardization of filing supplies and equipment. This Office recommends the use of these standard items in establishing new files or revamping existing files. In the course of making records surveys attention of operating personnel is called to ways and means of conserving space and filing equipment. This Office does not monitor all requests for filing supplies and equipment since requests for non-standard items require justification and concurrence of the Records Management Division as specified in [REDACTED]

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f. Vital Materials

For the past year this Office has had an active Vital Material Program. Beginning 1 January 1954 carbon copies of all Agency contracts are forwarded to the repository on a current basis, in lieu of microfilming bulky files at annual intervals. Procedures have been developed with Machine Records Division for forwarding of IBM records of stock on hand, in use, and in transit to the repository. A schedule of vital material of a recurring or continuing nature was issued for the guidance of LO personnel and this schedule is currently in the process of review and revision.

g. Microfilming Standards

Agency Notice [REDACTED] dated 14 July 1954 requested a survey and report of all microfilm equipment and microfilm operations within each Office. This Office submitted a report, including an inventory of equipment in Agency stock and in use in the Printing and Reproduction Division. Exclusive of the service performed by the Printing and Reproduction Division, actual microfilming operations of this Office are negligible in view of compliance with the informal policy to retire records to the Records Center when inactive, rather than to microfilm and destroy records.

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h. Records Scheduling

Physical inventories and surveys of records of Logistics Office are in progress and drafts of records schedules have been completed for the following components:

Office of the Chief  
Administrative Staff  
Security Staff  
Planning Staff  
ISAF Staff  
Transportation Division  
Real Estate and Construction Division  
Printing and Reproduction Division

Pending completion of surveys of the Procurement and Supply Divisions these drafts have not been submitted to Records Management Division in accordance with an expressed desire that the entire Office schedule be completed prior to coordination. Records scheduling has been integrated with other phases of the records program of this Office and it has been deemed advisable to seek the cooperation of the working personnel and instill in them an awareness of the need for properly maintained records to serve their current and future needs, as well as to facilitate records retirement.

1. Records Center Operations

In ten months of 1953 Logistics Office retired approximately 119 file drawers of record material. In ten months of 1954 this Office retired approximately 315 file drawers of record material. In the absence of a published procedure for processing material to the Records Center, Logistics Office personnel are being instructed in the proper preparation and processing of records for retirement.

2. In addition to the items listed in paragraph 1 above, this Office considers records management to include responsibility for all phases of document control and distribution. Progress in these respects is as follows:

a. Correspondence Control

In February of 1953 the Records Management Division surveyed the Logistics Office system of correspondence logging and control through use of Form 35-1 "File and Routing Slip" and recommended some changes in the application of this system. These recommendations were adopted and subsequently expanded and revised to provide a continuing control and eliminate, as far as possible, cumbersome book logging within the Divisions. This system has proved effective to the point that it has been demonstrated as a recommended guide to other components of the Agency at the request of the Records Management Division. Within the past year the control has been extended to include all dispatches, action cables and Official Personnel Files received and originated in the Office. Top Secret documents are similarly controlled within the Office, and the Agency Top Secret Control Officer concurs in the use of this system.

b. Pseudonyms and Aliases

Pseudonyms and aliases for operational purposes are centrally obtained and recorded as prescribed in [REDACTED]. The record has recently been expanded to include the registered pseudonyms of all LO career designees at headquarters and in the field.

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c. Cables

Cables normally received and additional requested cables are distributed to operating elements within the Office on the basis of assigned functions. Pseudonyms are removed (cut-out) and true names inserted to expedite reading and handling by operating personnel.

d. Distribution

Agency Regulation [REDACTED] requires the designation of a distribution officer for each office with prescribed responsibilities. Distribution schedules have been developed, submitted to the Regulations Control Staff and periodically revised to meet additional needs and organizational changes. A system of accountability for issuances received has been established, with individual copy accountability for "Distribution Controlled" issuances.

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e. Office Directives

The development of Office Instructions and Notices concerning all phases of records management as outlined above is also considered part of a records management program. Thirty-two such directives have been issued since January of 1953. (See Attachment A.)

3. The absence of Agency Regulations and directives concerning records management has handicapped this Office in the accomplishment of a records program. However, it is believed that progress has been made as indicated by the details in the foregoing paragraphs. Unless it is decided to place a staff of records analysts within the Office, the basic policy must necessarily be one of providing staff assistance and of guidance of operating personnel to an understanding of the principles and value of good records management.

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JAMES A. GARRISON  
Chief of Logistics

Attachment A